



## Larder report : New Year - new lockdown!

"Good King Wenceslas" seems to have gone out of favour! The carol describes how he "looked out on the feast of Stephen", the day after Christmas, to find and help the poor - King Wenceslas should be patron saint of Foodbanks!! The need continues and will no doubt increase. Much help is needed, so THANKS to the whole community for your continued support!!

The Exmouth Community Larder worked without a break throughout 2020.

2,315 packages were given out, to feed 4,837 people, approximately 58,044 meals!! King Wencelas' Page in verse two would have been proud! All supplies were derived from the generous donations from the whole of the wider community.

Citizens Advice has adapted since the first lockdown, and it is now in a good position to provide help and support. We are all suffering in different ways; being short of food is fundamental, but additionally many are trying to work out their finances in new circumstances; applying for grants and aid is as confusing as deciding how far to drive for a walk .... or walk briskly to where the gym was??

Hungry children don't learn well, so school meals are in the news; the Community Larder is aiming to provide sufficient help locally - certainly the ratio of families to individuals has greatly increased. Hopefully everyone who needs support is being referred to The Larder or will contact us direct at "[help@exmouthlarder.co.uk](mailto:help@exmouthlarder.co.uk)" or by phone to 07749 322291.

*"Children learning at home need devices" says Emma Jones, head teacher at Withycombe Primary School ..... "The DFE provided us with 5 ipads for vulnerable children - we are a school of 630 children so these 5 ipads don't go very far. We also have families with 1 device, but 3 or 4 children are all trying to access online."*

*Nicky Taylor-Bashford, head at St Joseph's Primary, adds: "Teachers and parents are all doing an amazing job, under very difficult circumstances. The news often refers to schools being closed - we are definitely not closed! Teachers continue to put the school children first before their own families and their own anxieties. They continue to teach all day in class whilst also trying to teach and engage children remotely. Parents are trying to support their own children's learning, often whilst juggling working from home and caring for other family members."*

With more people needing help with issues beyond just food, at The Larder we are returning to the principle of expecting a referral from such as CA, especially for repeated requests. This is not to limit referrals, but to verify that people are getting help with all their problems. Citizens Advice can be reached on 01395 265070 or 01404 42227 and will call back if busy. CA is also starting a scheme to raise funds and supply devices to those who need them for schooling.

Food remains our main project, but there is a lot of need all around us, and those who find themselves in a "food emergency" usually have many other troubles too!!

*Anthony Bernard, Exmouth Community Larder  
[www.exmouthlarder.co.uk](http://www.exmouthlarder.co.uk), mid January 2021*